

S/N: 10/541,175
Page 6 of 7

REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration of this application is requested in view of the above amendments and the following remarks. Claims 1-14 are pending.

The revision to claim 1 is supported at page 19, lines 16-18. The revision to claim 8 is supported at page 11, lines 15-18.

Claims 1, 2 and 8-14 have been rejected as anticipated by Zou. Claims 3-7 have been rejected as anticipated by or obvious over Zou. Applicants respectfully traverse these rejections.

The composition of claim 1 requires a composition that is essentially free of yttria. The paragraph bridging cols. 7-8 of the reference clearly identifies the significance of yttria to the reference compositions, which are intended to have properties such as high strength, high Young's modulus, heat resistance and excellent surface smoothness. Even if some of the specific compositions reported in the tables do not include yttria, the reference fails to include sodium oxide in the amount of 20-40% as required by claim 1. Sodium oxide merely is mentioned in the reference as an optional element that can be present in an amount up to 10%. The reference fails to teach the materials of claim 1, and there is no suggestion in the reference of how its compositions could be modified to achieve compositions that have the property of being suitable for high speed microprocessing without a tendency toward cracking like those of claim 1. Therefore, independent claim 1 is neither disclosed nor even suggested by Zou.

The composition of claim 8 requires particular ranges of silica, alumina, magnesium oxide and titanium oxide, and like the composition of claim 1 is essentially free of yttria. None of the yttria-free examples of Zou meets the content requirements for silica, alumina, magnesium oxide and titanium oxide set forth in claim 8. Again, nothing in Zou suggests that any of the yttria-free compositions in the specific examples should or could be modified to obtain compositions suitable for high speed microporcessing without a tendency toward cracking like those of claim 8. Therefore, independent claim 8 is neither disclosed nor even suggested by Zou.

Applicants therefore request that the rejections be withdrawn. Applicants are not conceding the relevance of Zou to the features of the dependent claims.


S/N: 10/541,175
Page 7 of 7

In view of the above, Applicants request reconsideration of the application in the form of
a Notice of Allowance.

Respectfully submitted,

HAMRE, SCHUMANN,
MUELLER & LARSON, P.C.
P.O. Box 2902
Minneapolis, MN 55402-0902
Phone: 612-455-3800

Date: March 2, 2009

By 
Name: Douglas P. Mueller
Reg. No. 30,300
Customer No. 52835